

2 TORII Suneemon

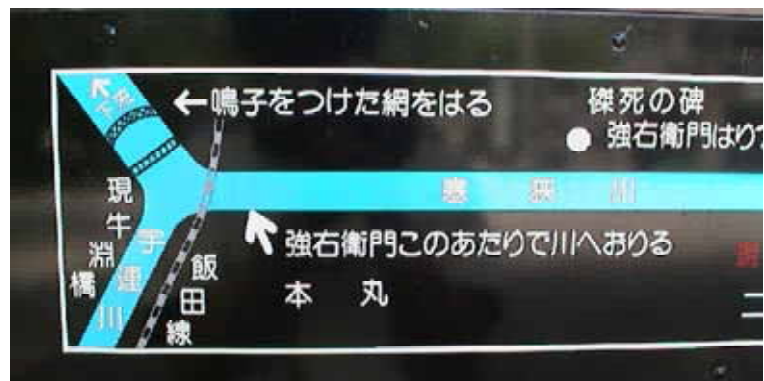
とりいすねえもん
<鳥居強右衛門>



- A : Wow! What is that signpost? It looks a bit funny.
 B : Yeah, when I first saw it as a child, I reacted in the same way. But now, he is a real hero of mine.
 A : A hero of yours? Sounds interesting. Who is he?
 B : He is a famous historical hero in East Mikawa, TORII Suneemon.
 A : Was he a lord?
 B : No, he wasn't. He was just a man who served the Lord of Nagashino Castle.
 A : Then what made him so famous?
 B : He saved his master and his castle at the cost of his own life when the castle was surrounded by 15,000 Takeda soldiers.
 A : That's a lot of soldiers! How did he overcome such a difficulty?
 B : He managed to sneak out of the castle in the darkness of night, swam down the river, and ran all the way to Okazaki Castle to ask TOKUGAWA Ieyasu for help.
 A : Was he successful?
 B : Yes, he was. The reinforcements dispatched by the ally engaged in a fierce battle against Takeda's army and repelled it.
 A : That's great. I'm curious to know what became of him. Did he get a bonus or something?
 B : Unfortunately, not. On his way back to his castle, he was caught by the enemy and crucified.
 A : Oh, what a shame!



Naruko-Ami (鳴子網)



TORII Suneemon

~ The Story of a Brave Man in Mikawa

In the days of TORII Suneemon, Japan was in "Sengoku jidai," a period of war, and many feudal lords (Sengoku Daimyo) were competing to conquer the country. This was before the politically stable period called the EDO era, which lasted for about 260 years.

The man who won the conquest here in central Japan was ODA Nobunaga, an ally of TOKUGAWA Ieyasu. The latter became the first general of the Tokugawa shogunate. Nobunaga's unification of the region, however, was not at all easy. In those days, he was thought to be so fierce and strong that the feudal lords around him conspired with each other and tried to defeat him. Among them, TAKEDA Shingen was one of his greatest and strongest enemies.

In 1575, Takeda's army was on its way to conquer the Tokugawa feudal estate. A small castle stood in their path. This was Nagashino Castle where TORII Suneemon was a servant to his master, OKUDAIRA Sadamasa. Soon the castle was surrounded by 15,000 soldiers from Takeda's army. The fate of the castle and the 500 lives inside were in a desperate situation. It was then that Torii Suneemon volunteered to be a secret messenger. He said that he would sneak out of the castle and go to Okazaki Castle to ask TOKUGAWA Ieyasu for help.

Late in the night, he set out on his mission. The castle was standing on a cliff, and under it ran a river with a strong current. First, he entered the sewer inside the castle. He knew it led to a way out on the cliff side. He got out, and carefully climbed down the cliff and stepped into the river in the darkness of the night. No one noticed him.

In the water, there were some Naruko-Ami, a kind of net attached to bells on the riverside to let the soldiers know if someone was attempting to leave the castle. He swam forward cutting these nets with a knife given to him by his master. After swimming about 6 km, he landed and hurried to Okazaki, which was about 45 km away. He ran through the night and at last arrived at Okazaki Castle the next day.

He was lucky to meet not only Ieyasu but also Nobunaga there. Nobunaga was very surprised to hear what he had done and said, "How brave you are! OK, tomorrow, I will send reinforcements with 3,000 guns. You look so exhausted. Now you may take some rest here." But Suneemon didn't follow these orders, saying "Thank you very much for your great kindness, but I would like to tell this news to my master as soon as possible. So I am going to leave here right away."

His luck, however, didn't last so long. On his way back to the castle, he was captured by Takeda's soldiers. One of Takeda's generals told him to shout to the castle that he had failed to ask for help and that nobody would be coming. He pretended to accept this, and was brought in front of the castle with his hands tied behind his back. There, all of a sudden, he



shouted with all of his might, "Hey, everybody, never give up! Reinforcements are coming, Nobunaga's great army is on its way! Many guns..." Before he finished his words, he was silenced and taken away. He was taken to the other side of the river, never to return. It became known that he was crucified there.

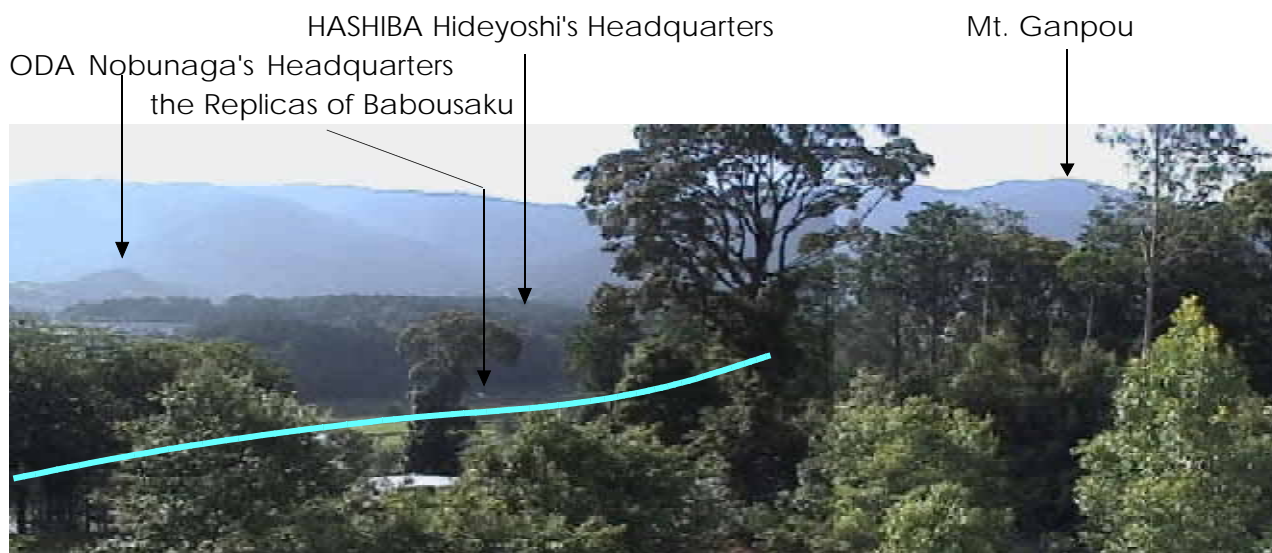


Babousaku

"Babousaku," the fence-like structure in the picture above, contributed greatly to Oda's triumph. Each soldier was forced to carry a log all the way from Mino, Gifu Prefecture. Babousaku prevented Takeda's cavalry from rushing into Oda's camp and also made it possible to shoot the enemy continuously for the first time in Japanese history: The guns they used in those days needed some time to reload and get ready to fire again, but Oda's snipers succeeded in shooting continuously at the enemy. They achieved this by forming 3 rows of soldiers, the first row would shoot from behind the Babousaku while the next row was preparing to fire.

<WORDS & PHRASES>

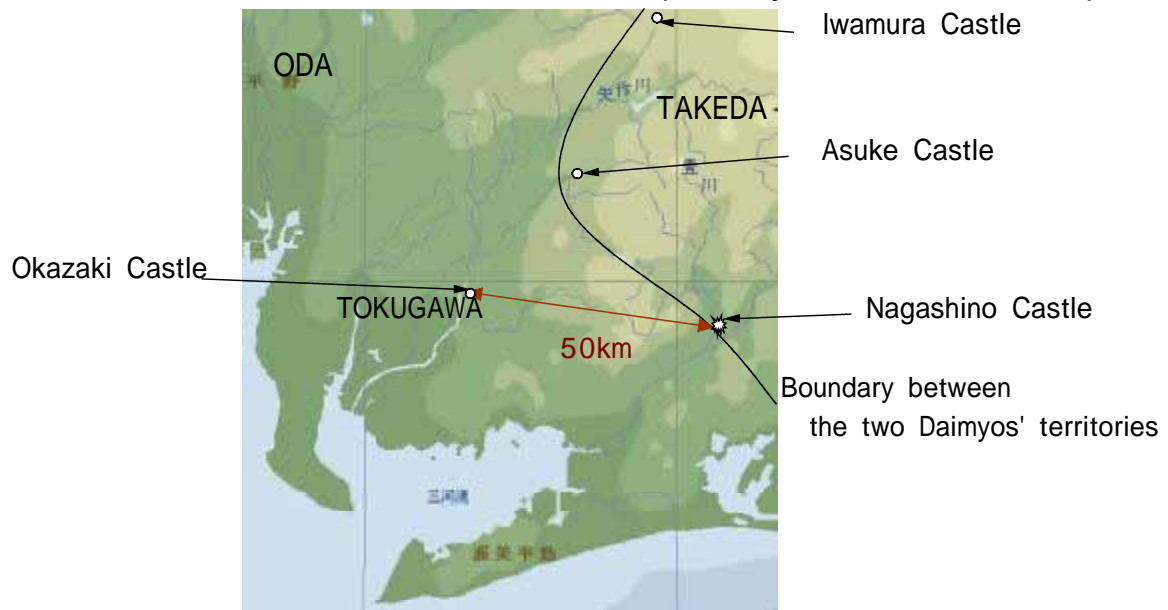
conquer 征服する conspire with ~ と共謀する feudal estate 封土 (ほうど: 大名の領地)
 on one's way 途中に desperate 絶望的な secret messenger 密使 cliff がけ
 sewer 下水路 attempt to ~することを企てる reinforcements 援軍 capture 捕える
 general 将軍 fail to ~することに失敗する crucify はりつけにする triumph 大勝利
 unification 統一 demise 没落



The battle field of Shitaragahara

This picture was taken from the roof of Shitaragahara History Reference Library. This is where Takeda's headquarters were set up. There didn't used to be tall trees in this area. The blue line in the picture shows the route of the Rengo River, over which Oda's and Takeda's soldiers gazed at each other prior to the battle. TORII Suneemon climbed Mt. Ganpou and made known his successful escape by lighting a fire to release a smoke signal on the mountainside. The people inside Nagashino Castle were very encouraged when they saw the signal.

The Situation of the Time (Daimyo's Territories)



PARAGRAPH READING

() 内に適当な語句を入れて段落ごとの内容をまとめてみよう。

- 鳥居強右衛門の生きた時代は(ア) 時代で大名達が(イ) しようとしのぎを削っていた。
- この時代の戦いを最後に制したのは(ウ) であったが、それまで彼の周りの大名たちは同盟し彼を倒そうとしてきた。中でも強大な力を誇り、彼の脅威であったのが(エ) であった。
- 1575年、(イ) は奥平定昌が城主である(オ) 城を(カ) 人の兵で取り囲んだ。城内の命は絶望的だった。この時家臣の(キ) が、岡崎城にいる(ク) に援軍を求めに行く密使となることを申し出た。
- <キが城から抜け出す動きを追ってみよう>
夜遅くに行動を開始。 城の(ケ) に入る。彼はそれががけの横穴に通じていることを知っていた。 横穴から抜け出す。 がけを降りて、(コ) に入った。 だれにも(サ) た。
- 水中には(シ) が張ってあった。これに触れると川岸の(ス) になる仕組みだった。彼はこれらを(セ) ながら泳いだ。(ソ) キロ泳いだ辺りで陸に上がり約(タ) キロ先にある(チ) へと急いだ。夜中走り続けた彼は、翌日到着した。
- そこには家康ばかりでなく(ツ) もいた。彼は(テ) て驚いた。そして翌朝(ト) 丁の鉄砲を持って兵を進めることを約束してくれた。彼は強右衛門に十分休んでいくよ う言ったが、彼はこの知らせを、(ナ) 自分の殿様に伝えたいと言って断った。
- 帰り道、彼はついに敵軍に捕まってしまった。敵軍は、彼に城に向かって(ニ) と叫ぶように命じた。彼はこれを受け入れたような(ヌ) をしていたが、城の前まで連れていかれると突然、(ネ) がやってくるぞ、と叫び城内の者を勇気づけたのであった。そのため彼は(ノ) にされ、帰らぬ人となった。
- 8, 9 この後、(ハ) 人の兵を擁する織田方と武田方の間で壮絶な戦いが行われた。これが(ヒ) の合戦で、(フ) 方の大勝利に終わり、(オ) 城の人々は助け出された。この戦いで強大な敵を破った(ツ) は天下統一に向けてさらに勢力を伸ばしていくことになるが、敗れた武田氏は没落へと向かうことになるのである。

ACCESS (to Nagashino Castle)

[CAR] about 19km north of Toyokawa IC (Tomei Highway)

[TRAIN] ten minutes' walk from Nagashinojo Station (JR Iida Line)